

SAFETY ALERT



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

AFZX-SA

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
6661 WARRIOR TRAIL, BUILDING 350
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5339



APR 06 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: House Fire -- Safety Alert 07-04

1. Recently, the living quarters of two military families were totally destroyed by fire. It has been determined that the cause of the fire was the improper disposal of charcoal briquettes in a plastic container near combustible material. A number of briquettes were placed in a paper bag and deposited into a plastic recycle bin a few hours before the fire's outbreak. The charcoal slowly burned and ultimately ignited nearby combustible materials. Although, the briquettes had been soaked in water, charcoal can re-ignite even when wetted down. No one was injured in the fire.

2. **What were the mistakes?**


- a. Improper disposal of charcoal.
- b. Placing the charcoal in a combustible container.
- c. Failing to verify that the charcoal was completely extinguished.

3. **Lessons Learned:**

- a. Never place ignited charcoal in combustible containers.
- b. Never assume that charcoal has been extinguished due to its wetness.
- c. Ensure that briquettes and ashes are placed in a noncombustible container.
- d. Never use charcoal grille near combustible material.

4. If you must dispose of charcoal and ashes before fully cooled, soak them completely in water before putting them in a non-combustible container. To dispose of the ashes, wrap in foil and put them in an empty non-combustible container.

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION, BRIEF TO ALL SOLDIERS, AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS!


DANIEL P. BOLGER
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

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